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In 1849 he went to Europe, for the first time. With the exception of a visit of a few weeks to New-York, in 1857, he has since resided in Italy—chiefly in Rome, where he has devoted himself, with the ardor of a Neophyte, to his beloved art. He was under the necessity of giving a considerable portion of his time to making copies of old pictures (in all cases, we believe, of Titian's), in fulfillment of commissions accepted before leaving this country. He has executed these obligations with such fidelity and conscientious earnestness that they have much of the merit of original productions. His copy of Titian's "Duke de Urbino," and of the "Flora" of that great artist, were so admirable, it is said, that connoisseurs who saw them side by side could with difficulty distinguish the originals from the copies.

Among the original works executed by Mr. Page in Rome, were portraits of Charlotte Cushman, and of Robert Browning, the poet, which have elicited high encomiums from European critics. He also painted a "Holy Family," now in possession of Abram M. Cozzens, Esq., of this city; also, a large number of smaller compositions for friends in this city and Boston—all of which are considered as of much value. His two greater works have been the two Venuses. One, representing the goddess just risen from the waves, standing on the head of a dolphin, at present is in the Boston Athenæum; the other, "Venus guiding Æneas and his Companions to the Latin Shore," now on exhibition at the Dusseldorf Gallery, in New-York, is a work which critics, both in the old world and the new, have pronounced among the finest things yet executed by an American artist. Its private and public exhibitions in Paris and London were successes of which any artist might be proud.*

The artist is now engaged on a "Moses," a composition of the highest class, worthy of his taste and genius.

Mr. Page's coloring commands general admiration, while his purity of sentiment, grace of expression, and the exquisite finish which he imparts to all his works, are characteristics which have served to individualise the artist, and to give him place among the most eminent of living painters.

He has the faculty of investing his por-

traits with the "historic presence," and in heads worthy of his pencil—such as those of Marcy, and Bryant, and Sewall—he has shown himself worthy of putting upon canvas, and preserving for posterity, the likenesses of the great men of his time.

It is to be hoped that he may be permitted many years of life and health to complete the works already matured in his mind, and thus add to the grace and glory of American art-genius.

X PLEA FOR AMERICAN ART.

A National Academy a National Want.



ARTISTS, generally, are in from their summer's tour of labor and pleasure, though a few are still lingering in the autumn woods and fields to steal something of their varied glories. These yearly migrations of our artists are now matters-of-course to those who aim at excellence in landscape. We see the good effects of these long and weary "tramps" in the rapidly developing excellence of the School of American Art, which certainly is not forming, but formed. What country or school furnishes landscapes like those of James and William Hart, Kensett, Cropsey, Church, Coleman, Shattuck, Gifford, Gignoux, Mignot, Sonntag? The English school gives us many, executed with a more consummate finish, and, perhaps, grace; but nothing which will bear to be paralleled with the works lately produced by the artists named, in freshness and depth of color, freedom of handling, breadth and force of expression, and exquisite re-production of Nature's features and moods. Bold in spirit, free in characterization, strongly individual, and somewhat extravagant in attempted effects, they still are full of sympathy and feeling, exquisite in their appreciation of Nature, full of harmony, and ideal enough to satisfy even the enthusiast. The confident, free, generous, and ambitious spirit of our people is answered in our art, which now commands recognition and admiration abroad as well as at home. Let our genius for it develop as rapidly in ten years to come as it has in the ten years just past, and we may well promise ourselves as great triumphs upon canvas as those in the world of commerce and literature.

This country now needs a National Academy, which shall sustain a more intimate relation to art in America than the

Royal Academy does to the art of England—more intimate, because more generous in its office, more widely cosmopolitan in its benefits. True, we have the "National Academy of Design," but it is a local affair, with no funds, no powers, no distinct purposes: it is *not* "national" in any sense. We want and must have a National Academy, which shall comprise:

1st. A perpetual Gallery of Art, to which *all* persons shall be admitted, *free*. It must comprise specimens of what is best in art and design in the Old World—models and casts of the renowned statues, busts, medallions, &c., of antiquity as well as of modern times—duplicates of the cartoons and alto-relievos which Michel Angelo, Raphael and their successors, have left behind them to excite the emulation of all time.

2d. An endowment of professorships in all departments of Painting, Sculpture and Design, with a thorough system of study and gradation in courses which shall end in diplomas, medals and honors.

3d. A library, embracing every attainable work necessary to impart a full knowledge of art, history and practice—memoirs and biographies of art-workers—critiques, essays and papers, relating to the subject, either in its ideal or practical aspects.

4th. Rooms for study and facilities for labor.

Do any say this is impractical, they are simply short-sighted or deceived, for it is *easily and eminently feasible*. It needs but to have the proper management; the enterprise would find co-operators and friends enough to make a princely endowment if the matter were put into tangible shape. Look at the Astor Library endowment—the work of one man only! Nearly one million of dollars anchored in a perpetual and *free* benefit to all. Look at the Cooper Institute—the work of one man! An institution great enough to afford an asylum for the Academy proposed, and to confer all its other benefits to industry, labor and education besides. A National Academy is so easily attainable, that the wonder is it has not already had its foundations deeply and securely laid in this great metropolis of Mind, Money and Industry.

The first requisite—a most important one, and seemingly difficult of attainment—is rendered comparatively easy by the offer made by Mr. Bryan, of this city, who proposes to make a free and unrestricted gift to such an institution, of all his mag-

* For more special notice of this work, see a succeeding page of this Journal.

nificent collection of the works of masters of the various schools since the time of Cimabue and Giotto. This collection has cost an immense sum of money—has been the labor of a life-time to gather it—has been selected with a taste and discretion truly remarkable, for, not only is each master and school represented, but the vast variety of subjects leaves little to wish for: it is four centuries of Art brought into one series of rooms—a mosaic, made up of the Louvre, the Vatican and St. Peter's, and the Galleries of Florence, Dresden, Vienna and Amsterdam. The additions of the necessary casts, or duplicates of the marbles, bronzes, reliefs, &c., of the Old World, would be an easy accession; and, until a proper building could be provided, the Cooper Institute, doubtless, would afford the rooms necessary for exhibition, study, library, and lectures. All that is needed is the energy of organization, to unite means, which, we believe, are ready to be given, for the endowment of the professorships, the library, &c. What, then, is to prevent the necessary steps from being taken in the matter? Why can we not see a National Academy rising in our midst, to grow with our growth, to expand with our strength, to foster, direct and perfect the art-taste and art-development of the country?

SHAKSPEARE.

THE New-Orleans "*Sunday Delta*" has a pleasant essay upon the character of Shakspeare and the relation which he sustained to his contemporaries. As the view taken of the subject is one combatting the usually received opinion that the poet was a "roysterer at the club," and that he was a familiar with his fellows, we quote the article at length, and commend it to the attention of our readers:

"The new engraving for the sixth year of the Cosmopolitan Art Association is the most superb and finished work, as regards design and execution, and most intrinsically interesting, in a historical and literary view, which the Association has yet issued. It is engraved from the magnificent painting of John Faed, R. S. A., entitled 'Shakspeare and His Friends,' by James Faed, the brother of the painter. The plate was originally engraved for special subscribers, at forty dollars for a

proof and twenty dollars for a print; but owing to its elaborate character it could not be delivered in time, and the London publishers having consented to dispose of the plate and copyright, the Cosmopolitan Art Association of New-York were so fortunate as to become its purchasers for a large sum of money, and it now forms their presentation plate for this year.

"This engraving is twenty-two by twenty-eight inches, on heavy plate paper, thirty by thirty-eight inches. It contains fifteen figures, drawn from authentic portraits, dressed in the costume of Queen Elizabeth's time, and grouped in standing and sitting postures, with fine effect and with due regard for the relations they bore to the principal character. Shakspeare, the central figure, is represented discoursing to the 'Club,' and the fourteen subordinate figures are represented in a listening attitude, respectful, thoughtful and sympathetic, but unstrained, easy and confidential, as it was natural for them to be in the presence of the great, the many-sided, the cosmical, but also the 'gentle Shakspeare.'

"Besides Shakspeare, the group includes Ben Jonson, ('Rare Ben,') Sir Walter Raleigh, Bacon, Beaumont, Fletcher, Seldon, Sylvester, Earl of Dorset, Camden, Donne, Earl of Southampton, Sir Robert Cotton, Dekker, and Daniel. We especially like the strict subordination of these surrounding figures to Shakspeare. We hardly agree with those critics who look upon Shakspeare as only a larger giant amongst a race of giants. We think that it would be vain to search for anything Shakspearean in Shakspeare's cotemporaries. Whatever might have been his social relations, whatever his literary or personal friendships, his genius was "like a star, and dwelt apart." Like a star, the painter very justly makes him the luminous central figure amongst the most eminent of his cotemporaries, who willingly 'pale their ineffectual fires,' and submit to a mild eclipse.

"Too much could scarcely be said of the effective manner in which the light and shade are distributed in the engraving. The drapery is rich and abundant, and all other necessities are liberally given, but in every detail they in no wise obscure, but serve to set off the entire group, and every figure of it. There is a notable absence in this work of features suggestive of festive habits and irregular life, which it was once common to ascribe to Shakspeare

and his favorite companions. There are no signs of 'cakes and ale' in the whole scene, and cakes and ale, according to the latest and soundest criticism, would have no business there. Schlegel well remarked that Shakspeare was 'a profound artist, and not a blind and wildly-luxuriant genius,' and Coleridge also maintained that the supposed irregularities and extravagances of Shakspeare were 'the mere dreams of pedantry that arraigned the eagle because it had not the dimensions of the swan.' The law of unity is incompatible with the idea that a mind so artistic, laborious and productive, was spasmodic, unsystematic, and disorderly."

How we long for repose! Repose such as the drowning man is said to feel as he sinks to the bottom to sleep in the stillness there. Such as the child must feel asleep on its mother's breast. Such as the true Christian must feel in the conscious moment of God's presence. Ah, few, indeed, of us know how to enjoy the quiet which *ought* to be our daily companionship. We all work, and think, and plan too much, making life one weary march. How much more would it comport with the designs and wishes of Providence if we would tarry awhile out of every day's march, to enjoy the cool springs by the way, the refreshing shade of the trees, the delicious aroma of fruits and flowers, which God has so apparently made for us. We have often thought of the blacksmith's widow, whose story is related by the good Jeremy Taylor. He says of her: "Thus she lived, poor, patient, and resigned. Her heart was a passion flower, bearing within it the crown of thorns and the cross of Christ. Her ideas of heaven were few and simple. She rejected the doctrine that it was the place of constant activity and not of repose, and believed that, when she at length reached it, she would work no more, but would sit in a clean white apron, and sing psalms."

Dear, delightful place, even in her own simple conception! What a being ours would be if repose, full, sweet, complete repose, were not vouchsafed us after we had passed through the Valley and Shadow. Thank God for sleep, for night, for they are balms sweeter than dew to the thirsting flowers—they soothe our weariness, hush our unrest, make us strong for the day's labor, and turn us heavenward by the thought of the great Peace that awaits our closing day of life.